

Best Practice 1: Induction Programme for F.Y.B.COM

1. Title of the Practice: Induction 2021-22 for F.Y.B.Com Students

2. Objectives of the Practice

1. To orient the entry point students towards the academic systems in the college under the freshly acquired autonomy of MES GCC.
2. To acquaint the new students with the various curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular units in the college
3. To mentor the students for coping easily with the Online Education due to the ongoing Pandemic
4. To build a bridge of confidence between the freshers and alumni so as to make the freshers feel at home in the new college life ahead

3. The Context

1. The UG courses entry point is often a critical new phase in students' lives. Admission into a new college and the resultant feeling of a fear of the unknown can be an intimidating experience for many. To help students overcome this fear and sense of alienation, every year the college organizes a detailed Induction programme for FYBCom students. Usually this 2 Day Induction Programme takes place in the spacious Assembly Hall of the College by erecting stalls, wherein all the 30 curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular committees display information on flakes and standees and take new registrations of interested students.
2. Due to the pandemic, for the Academic Year 2021-22 the Induction Program was conducted in full online mode. This being the first year of autonomy for the college, such an Induction Programme was really pivotal in building a bridge of trust and confidence between the college and the entry point students.
3. Hence, it was decided to conduct a special two-days' online Induction Program on its Zoom platform.

4. The Practice

1. On 30th Sept 2021- Day I, the programme opened with Hon. Principal's Address to FYBCom students. Around 300+ students had attended the said online event. This was followed by interactions with faculty.
2. The college had also invited two alumni each for every activity unit in the college. The alumni elaborated how the participation in such activities organized by the college had helped them grow, develop their interpersonal as well as presentations skills and boosted their confidence. They all underlined how they are currently reaping the benefits of such campus-life experiences in their professional lives. These interactions motivated the

students to participate in different co-curricular, extra-curricular and extension activities and boosted their confidence in the college and its environment.

3. On 1st Oct 2021 – Day II, the online programme unfurled all the Academic systems in the college including exam system, scholarships and other Government compliances, Online Education System and Information Dissemination Platforms etc. in GCC. The Controller of Exams – Dr. Vinayak Pawar gave a detailed presentation about the academic credits system under autonomy. He also elaborated upon the CGPA & Non-CGPA credit allocations. He also clarified about the ATKT rules and norms for evaluation and result declaration.
4. Thereafter, an admin office staff elaborated upon various Government Scholarship schemes and eligibility criteria for the same and appealed to the students to take benefit of the same.
5. Vice-Principal Dr. Ketaki Modak, then, elaborated upon the Online Education System and Information Dissemination Platforms in GCC. She gave an elaborate presentation about the Online Classrooms and the process of joining these virtual classrooms. She also acquainted the students with the three information dissemination platforms: the College Website, the internal miniweb and the Class WhatsApp groups, which together ensure a seamless flow of communication between the college and the students and their parents.
6. The next session also involved the guidance and mentoring by the Heads of the various curricular, co-curricular, extra-curricular and extension activity units.

5. Evidence of Success

The evidence of the success of this Online Orientation and Mentoring Programme has been:

1. All the subject Google Classrooms were joined by students within one week of the Induction Programme and all online lectures were smoothly conducted as per the time table. The students also attempted their 40 marks internal evaluation online while the Sem-end exams were conducted on the new ERP platform Mastersoft. The entire online mode hardly posed any hindrances or confusions on part of students in the TLE process.
2. Fortunately, the Sem II of this academic year saw the college campus flooded with students as the Pandemic started receding. The FYBCom students were able to be physically on campus for the first time in the year. Yet, the Induction had acquainted them with the college, the library, the admin office, the various activity units etc. so well that the students got readily comfortable with the new Campus Life.
3. All the activity units had created online registration forms and hence had enthusiastic students enrolled already for their various activities. Resultantly, the Sem II saw a plethora of colourful activities conducted on campus.

6. Problems encountered and solutions provided -

Some of the problems encountered are listed below -

Sr. No.	Problem Encountered	Solutions sought / are being sought
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1.	The problems of internet connectivity were faced by some students staying in the remote areas.	Every session was recorded so that students who missed any session could refer to the same later. These sessions were posted on the college YouTube Channel and the links were posted on the class WhatsApp groups.
2.	Online interactions of students were relatively less as compared to offline Induction Programme conducted every year.	The Class Guardians took up the responsibility of orienting and mentoring their students again and again as required and ensured that the students were comfortable and fulfilled all the technical and/or official compliances.

Best Practice 2: Mentoring Business Ideas through sustained efforts at Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Startup (EIS) Cell

1. Title of the Practice:

EIS-Cell's Sustainable Business Idea Development Model: Idea-to-Enterprise

2. Objectives of the Practice

1. To orient the volunteers of Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Start-up Cell with the steps in methodical innovative and entrepreneurial thinking
2. To provide informative content, case studies and relevant examples for each of these steps involved.
3. To motivate the students to identify business-worthy problems and come up with innovative solutions for the same and develop them into business ideas
4. To provide professional mentoring to the budding business ideators so that their ideas become strong and viable
5. To provide a platform for these budding entrepreneurs to test the economic feasibility and customer response to their business ideas

3. The Context

1. The Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Start-up Cell perennially organizes events and activities to hone the entrepreneurial traits and skills among its student volunteers.
2. The ongoing Pandemic since the last academic year 2020-21 continued to eclipse the first part of academic year 2021-22 as well. The resultant Online TLE remained theoretical and threatened to hinder the experiential part of motivating and mentoring the budding entrepreneurs properly.
3. Hence the need was felt to do the needful changes in online mode of instructions and offer blended mode whenever possible.

4. The Practice

1. The Faculty Head of EIS-Cell created a special Google Classroom titled “A Crash Course on Innovative Entrepreneurship” for the student volunteers. This is an eight-module course designed for self-paced learning. Modules include seminal entrepreneurship related topics like basics of entrepreneurship, Innovation, Biomimicry, design thinking etc. and provided advanced tools like Business model canvas, Javelin Board, Value Proposition Canvas etc.
2. The Core Team Student Leaders were given the responsibility of conducting weekly online brain-storming sessions on each module and ensuring proper uptake of the inputs. The Faculty Head occasionally orchestrated these discussions.
3. Gradually, the participants were motivated to look for problems around and come up with creative, innovative solutions. Internal discussions and brainstorming brought forth and concretized around ten business ideas from this batch.
4. Thankfully, in Term II of the academic year, the college campus opened in the offline mode. In this promising second part of the year, in all three professional Mentoring sessions were conducted to convert these fledgling business ideas into viable and sustainable business models.
5. Dr. Jyoti Gogte from DeAsra Foundation, who is also an empaneled mentor on EIS-Cell team, was invited on 14th Feb 2022 to mentor the ten business ideas. She interacted with the student ideators in great detail and patiently listened to their business ideas. She suggested some further research, some market study, some costing-pricing exercises etc. to each of the business idea proposals as per their individual need.
6. After a gap of ten days for completion of this home-work, she again met them on 24th Feb 2022 – this time in online mode and took a review of their work and made them realize the incremental improvements they had made and thus boosted their confidence.
7. EIS-Cell, then invited an external mentor to further shape up these ten business ideas. On 16th March 2022, Dr. Dipti - the Vice-Chairperson of SME Chamber of India (Pune Chapter) was invited in online mode to interact with the ten business ideators. SME Chambers of India helps small and medium businesses across India, hence this Guest Mentor provided new insights and imparted a new vision to the budding entrepreneurs. She also gave several references and offered an internship opportunity to one of the business idea presenters.
8. These three intermittent mentoring sessions gave significant confidence and direction to the business ideas that had come up as an aftermath of the training provided through the initial Google Classroom. Now EIS-Cell felt the need to provide actual experiential learning opportunities to these students. The experiential learning was endeavored to be provided in three ways.
 - a. Encouraging students to participate in various Business Idea Competitions
 - b. Providing opportunities of sale on campus through the Campus Company initiative. A Physical Business Fair was organized on Campus from 23rd April – 30th April 2022 for the same.
 - c. Efforts to create an indigenous online E-Commerce platform for these entrepreneurs to learn the nitty-gritties of the Online Trade world. A Virtual Business Fair was organized from 18th April – 30th April 2022 on the same.
9. The cycle from Idea to Enterprise, thus came a full circle from Oct 2021 (introduction of the Google Classroom) to April 2022 (the Business Fair).

5. Evidence of Success

The evidence of the success of this Idea-to-Enterprise model has been:

1. In all, around 75 students joined the Google Classroom and participated wholeheartedly in the online as well as offline discussions, brainstorming, mentoring provided by EIS-Cell. From Oct 2021 to Jan 2022, such deliberations resulted in many business ideas and ten of the best of them were chosen for further mentoring from Feb 2022 to April 2022. In a matter of just a few months, all these young entrepreneurs have made the prime motto of EIS-cell successful and are at various stages of their start-ups. Following are the names of those startups.

1. NEST 2. Vibe.it 3. GlowsCo 4. Padmaja Hair Oil, 5. Website Bazar	6. HSM Hampers 7. Serene Fragrances 8. Kalakari.Co, 9. Span, 10. Lipbam Boo
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2. These ten ideas were impelled to participate in various Business Idea Competitions and one of the start-ups called NEST – proposed by Ms. Isha Bargaje (SYBCom) and Mr. Yashwant Kute (FYBBA) bagged the following prizes at different forums.
 - a. **First Prize** - International Business Plan Competition (Startex 3.0 - DKTE Society's Textile & Engineering Institute Ichalkaranji)
 - b. **Second Prize** - National Business Plan Competition (Conquest22- Shaheed Rajguru College of applied Sciences for Women, Delhi)
 - c. **First Prize** - National Business Plan Competition (Doon Business School, Dehradun)
 - d. **National Social Venture Award** - (Bizneeti22. Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, (NMIMS) Mumbai)
 - e. **Second Prize** - National Business Plan Competition (Business Idea Contest- MES Garware College of Commerce, Pune)
3. Together these start-ups actually rolled out their ventures and showed a significant turn-over and potential during the Business Fair conducted in the blended mode in April 2022.

6. Problems encountered and solutions provided -

Some of the problems encountered are listed below –

Sr. No.	Problem Encountered	Solutions sought / are being sought
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1.	<p>Due to the completely online mode in the first half of the academic year, the entrepreneurial training remained theoretical to a large extent and the students on the google classroom were lagging behind in covering the modules every week</p>	<p>The faculty organized some online supplementary brainstorming sessions on 17 SDGs and made students take us case studies on entrepreneurs working towards finding each of the SDGs. The Core Team Student leaders as well took up the responsibility of weekly brainstorming sessions to provide momentum to the online learning.</p> <p>The Cell also started building up its own E-Commerce platform with the help of BBA(CA) alumni so as to provide an experiential learning platform for the students.</p>
2.	<p>The E-Commerce platform developed by BBA(CA) alumni happened to break down during the Online Business Fair in April 2022. Thus, we realized that more professional help needs to be sought in order to build a robust E-Commerce platform for the Campus Company start-up forum.</p>	<p>1. By April 2022, Campus had opened for offline mode. Hence, in the event of the website failure, the Cell immediately switched to the offline Business Fair on campus for the last part of the Business Fair.</p> <p>2. The BBA(CA) faculty have been contacted for troubleshooting and they have promised to build a stronger website as the E-Commerce Platform of GCC Campus Company by the next academic year.</p>